10. Taking official notice of its own internal records, pursuant to Business and Professions Code section 125.3, it is hereby determined that the reasonable costs for Investigation and Enforcement is \$6,910.50 as of December 17, 2010.

### **DETERMINATION OF ISSUES**

- Based on the foregoing findings of fact, Respondent Tracy Lynn Blankenship has subjected her Registered Nurse License No. RN 695115 to discipline.
  - 2. The agency has jurisdiction to adjudicate this case by default.
- 3. The Board of Registered Nursing is authorized to revoke Respondent's Registered Nurse License based upon the following violations alleged in the Accusation which are supported by the evidence contained in the Default Decision Investigatory Evidence Packet in this case:
- A. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions Code section 2761, subdivision (a) on grounds of unprofessional conduct, as defined in Business and Professions Code section 2762, subdivisions (a) and (b), for violating Health and Safety Code section 11170,11171, and 11173 subdivisions (a) and/or (b) and/or (c) in that while on duty as a registered nurse assigned to the Emergency Room of Simi Valley hospital in Simi Valley, CA, on or about July 9 10, 2007, Respondent obtained Dilaudid and Ativan for self-administration by use of fraud, deceit, misrepresentation and/or subterfuge by acts related to withdrawal of medications from the Pyxis system in the name of patients 1001677416 and 1001678737, by reason of the following facts:
- (1) Between approximately March 2007 and July 10, 2007, Respondent was employed as a non-staff Nurse Traveler at Simi Valley Hospital (SVH), assigned to the Emergency Room. Her employment at SVH was terminated on or about July 10, 2007.
  - (2) At all times relevant herein, SVH employed a Pyxis system.
- (3) After noticing irregularities during a routine audit of controlled substance withdrawals from the Pyxis system, an SVH-pharmacist investigated controlled substance withdrawals made by Respondent while on duty during her July 9 July 10, 2007 shift. This investigation, which included a review of documented Physician's Orders and Medication Administration Records, disclosed at least two instances of apparent diversion.

### (4) PATIENT # 1001677416

Documented physicians orders for patient 1001677416 were for Morphine and Percocet :

	7/9/07	1230	4mg Morphine
	7/9/07	1320	8mg Morphine
İ	7/9/07	1320	Two tables (2.5mg each) Percocet

However, medication withdrawals from Pyxis for Patient 1001677416 by Respondent show unauthorized withdrawals of Dilaudid (2mg) and Ativan (.5 mg), in addition to medications ordered by the patient's physician:

Date	Time of Removal/ Signed out	Medication and amount	Physician's order	Medication Charted	Wasted	Nurses Notes Charted	Discrepancy amount
7/9/07	1232	4mg Morphine	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/9/07	1323	8mg Morphine	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/9/07	1407	2mg Dilaudid	No	No	No	None	2mg Dilaudid
7/9/07	1344	Percocet 2 tabs (2.5 mg)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/09/07	0825	.5mg Ativan	No	No	No	No	.5mg Ativan

## (5) PATIENT #1001678737

Documented Physician's Order(s) for patient 1001678737 were for Dilaudid:

-Date	Time	Medication Ordered		
		·		
7/9/07	No time documented	1mg Dilaudid		
7/9/09	0120	1mg Dilaudid		

However, medication withdrawals from Pyxis for Patient #1001678737 by Respondent show unauthorized withdrawals of 1.5 mg Dilaudid in addition to authorized withdrawals:

Date	Time of	Medication	Physician's	Medication	waste	Nurses	Discrepancy
	removal/signe	and amount	order	Charted		Notes	Amount
	d out					Charted	
7/9/07	2359	2mg	1mg	Yes-1mg	No	Yes	1mg
		Dilaudid	Dilaudid				Dilaudid
7/9/07	0123	2mg Dilaudid	1mg Dilaudid	Yes-1mg	.5mg Wasted at 0601	Yes	.5mg Dilaudid

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- (6) As a result of the investigation, Respondent's employment at SVH was terminated.
- (7) On or about March 8, 2010, during an interview with the Board's investigator, Respondent admitted that she had in fact diverted quantities of both Dilaudid and Ativan from SVH during her shift on July 9 10, 2007. Respondent stated that she diverted the drugs for her own use to self-medicate for stress and acute depression which were overwhelming to her at that time.
- (8) Dilaudid is a Schedule II controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 11055. Dilaudid is a brand name for Hydromorphone. It is a narcotic analgesic used for the relief of severe pain.
- (9) Ativan is a Schedule IV controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 11057. Ativan is a brand name for Lorazepam. It is benzodiazepine used for the relief of anxiety, panic attacks and chronic sleeplessness.
- B. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions Code section 2762, subdivision (b) in that Respondent used controlled substances to an extent or in a manner dangerous to herself or others in that, by her own admission, during her shift at SVH on July 9-10, 2007, she diverted from 2 patients the drugs Dilaudid and Ativan, and self-administered the drugs while on duty, as described more fully in paragraph "A" above.
- C. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions

  Code section 2762 (e) in that she falsified and/or made grossly incorrect, grossly inconsistent, or
  unintelligible entries into SVH Pyxis system records, by reason of her unauthorized withdrawal of
  Dilaudid and Ativan for patients 1001677416 and 1001678737, in order to diverted the drugs for
  self-administration, as described more fully in-paragraph-"A" above.
- D. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2761, subdivision (a) on grounds of unprofessional conduct, in that Respondent committed unprofessional conduct in that while on duty as a registered nurse assigned to the Emergency Room of Simi Valley

1	hospital in Simi Valley, CA, on or about July 9 – 10, 2007, in that Respondent obtained Dilaudid
2	and Ativan for self-administration by withdrawal of medications from the Pyxis system in the
3	name of patients 1001677416 and 1001678737, as described more fully in paragraph "A" above.
4	<u>ORDER</u>
5	IT IS ORDERED that Registered Nurse License No. RN 695115, heretofore issued to
6	Respondent TRACY LYNN BLANKENSHIP, is revoked.
7	Pursuant to Government Code section 11520, subdivision (c), Respondent may serve a
8	written motion requesting that the Decision be vacated and stating the grounds relied on within
9	seven (7) days after service of the Decision on Respondent. The agency in its discretion may
10	vacate the Decision and grant a hearing on a showing of good cause, as defined in the statute.
11.	This Decision shall become effective on April 1, 2011.
12	It is so ORDERED March 9, 2011  Glennine K. Lewes
13	Glennine K. Lewer
14	FOR THE BOARD OF REGISTERED NURSING
15	DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
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22	
23	60591488.DOC
24	DOJ Matter ID: LA2010600551
25	Attachment: Exhibit A: Accusation
26	
27	

Exhibit A

Accusation

	( ) ·	( )
1 2	EDMUND G. BROWN JR. Attorney General of California GREGORY J. SALUTE Supervising Deputy Attorney General	•
3	Susan Melton Wilson	
4	Deputy Attorney General State Bar No. 106902	
5	300 So. Spring Street, Suite 1702 Los Angeles, CA 90013	
6	Telephone: (213) 897-4942 Facsimile: (213) 897-2804	
7	E-mail: Susan. Wilson@doj.ca.gov Attorneys for Complainant	
8		RE THE
9	DEPARTMENT OF C	STERED NURSING CONSUMER AFFAIRS
10	STATE OF C	CALIFORNIA
11	In the Matter of the Accusation Against:	Case No. 2011-391
12	TRACY LYNN BLANKENSHIP	
13	2039 Plantation Road Lawrenceville, Georgia 30044	ACCUSATION
14	Registered Nurse License No. 695115	
15	Respondent.	
16	Respondent.	
17	Complainant alleges:	
18	PAR	TIES
19	1. Louise R. Bailey, M.Ed., RN (Comp	lainant) brings this Accusation solely in her
20.	official capacity as the Interim Executive Officer	of the Board of Registered Nursing, Department
21	of Consumer Affairs.	
22	2. On or about January 8, 2007, the Box	ard of Registered Nursing issued Registered
23	Nurse License Number 695115 to Tracy Lynn B	lankenship (Respondent). The Registered Nurse
24	License was in full force and effect at all times re	elevant to the charges brought herein and expired
25-	on-April-10, 2010, and has not been-renewed.	
26	///	•
27	///	
28	///	
		1

Accusation

3. This Accusation is brought before the Board of Registered Nursing (Board),
Department of Consumer Affairs, under the authority of the following laws. All section
references are to the Business and Professions Code unless otherwise indicated.

#### STATUTORY PROVISIONS

- 4. Section 2750 of the Business and Professions Code (Code) provides, in pertinent part, that the Board may discipline any licensee, including a licensee holding a temporary or an inactive license, for any reason provided in Article 3 (commencing with section 2750) of the Nursing Practice Act.
- 5. Section 2764 of the Code provides, in pertinent part, that the expiration of a license shall not deprive the Board of jurisdiction to proceed with a disciplinary proceeding against the licensee or to render a decision imposing discipline on the license. Under section 2811(b) of the Code, the Board may renew an expired license at any time within eight years after the expiration.
  - 6. Section 2762 of the Code states:

"In addition to other acts constituting unprofessional conduct within the meaning of this chapter [the Nursing Practice Act], it is unprofessional conduct for a person licensed under this chapter to do any of the following:

- "(a) Obtain or possess in violation of law, or prescribe, or except as directed by a licensed physician and surgeon, dentist, or podiatrist administer to himself or herself, or furnish or administer to another, any controlled substance as defined in Division 10 (commencing with Section 11000) of the Health and Safety Code or any dangerous drug or dangerous device as defined in Section 4022.
- "(b) Use any controlled substance as defined in Division 10 (commencing with Section 11000) of the Health and Safety Code, or any dangerous drug or dangerous device as defined in Section 4022, or alcoholic beverages, to an extent or in a manner dangerous or injurious to himself or herself, any other person, or the public or to the extent that such use impairs his or her ability to conduct with safety to the public the practice authorized by his or her license.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in this division, every person who possesses an
controlled substance specified in subdivision (e) of Section 11054 shall be punished by
imprisonment in the county jail for not more than one year or in the state prison.

- (c) Except as otherwise provided in this division, whenever a person who possesses any of the controlled substances specified in subdivision (a) or (b), the judge may, in addition to any punishment provided for pursuant to subdivision (a) or (b), assess against that person a fine not to exceed seventy dollars (\$70) with proceeds of this fine to be used in accordance with Section 1463.23 of the Penal Code. The court shall, however, take into consideration the defendant's ability to pay, and no defendant shall be denied probation because of his or her inability to pay the fine permitted under this subdivision.
- (d) Except in unusual cases in which it would not serve the interest of justice to do so, whenever a court grants probation pursuant to a felony conviction under this section, in addition to any other conditions of probation which may be imposed, the following conditions of probation shall be ordered:
- (1) For a first offense under this section, a fine of at least one thousand dollars (\$1,000) or community service.
- (2) For a second or subsequent offense under this section, a fine of at least two thousand dollars (\$2,000) or community service.
- (3) If a defendant does not have the ability to pay the minimum fines specified in paragraphs (1) and (2), community service shall be ordered in lieu of the fine."
- 11. Section 125.3 of the Code provides, in pertinent part, that the Board may request the administrative law judge to direct a licentiate found to have committed a violation or violations of the licensing act to pay a sum not to exceed the reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of the case.

#### **DEFINITIONS**

12. <u>Dilaudid</u> -- a Schedule II controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 11055. Dilaudid is a brand name for Hydromorphone. It is a narcotic analgesic used for the relief of severe pain.

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- 13. <u>Ativan</u>—a Scheduled IV controlled substance pursuant to Health and Safety Code Section 11057. Ativan is a brand name for Lorazepam. It is benzodiazepine used for the relief of anxiety, panic attacks and chronic sleeplessness.
- dispensing system, which operates similarly to an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) at a bank. The Pyxis medication dispensing machines are serviced by the facility's pharmacy. Medications are placed in the Pyxis machines, which are usually stationed throughout the hospital. These medications can only be accessed, or withdrawn by an authorized staff person using their own unique personalized access code. Each medical professional at the hospital is assigned an account number and a "one time only" access code number. The access code number allows the individual to access the Pyxis System only one time. Upon making this initial access, the Pyxis System prompts the individual to enter his or her own unique access number or PIN code. The Pyxis System will not permit the use of a PIN code that has been used by any former employee, or is being used by any other current employee. After entering their own unique PIN code and each time the Pyxis System is accessed using that PIN code, the person making access is identified and a database record of the transaction is made; which is similar to the ATM withdrawal of funds from a bank account. The Pyxis System specifically records the following:
  - 1) The identities of medical personnel, who have accessed the identified medications.
- 2) The identities of the patients that the medications were allegedly withdrawn on behalf of and administered to.
  - 3) The date/time the medications were withdrawn by the identified employee.

The Pyxis System in response to the employee's drug withdrawals then updates the hospital's pharmacy inventory for each particular medication withdrawn. The Pyxis System records the time and date of access, and is able to provide a record of the drugs being accessed by the employee via the patient's name, the patient's ID number; the identity of the medical facility's employee making access; the name and quantity of the drug accessed; and location of the particular Pyxis unit accessed.

#### SUMMARY OF FACTS

- 15. The following allegations are common to all Causes for Discipline:
- A. Between approximately March 2007 and July 10, 2007, Respondent was employed as a non-staff Nurse-Traveler at Simi-Valley-Hospital (SVH), assigned to the Emergency Room. Her employment at SVH was terminated on or about July 10, 2007.
  - B. At all times relevant herein, SVH employed a Pyxis system.
- C. After noticing irregularities during a routine audit of controlled substance withdrawals from the Pyxis system, an SVH pharmacist investigated controlled substance withdrawals made by Respondent while on duty during her July 9 July 10, 2007 shift. This investigation, which included a review of documented Physician's Orders and Medication Administration Records, disclosed at least two instances of apparent diversion:

### (1). PATIENT # 1001677416

(a). Documented physicians orders:

7/9/07	1230	4mg Morphine
7/9/07	1320	8mg Morphine
7/9/07	1320	Two tables (2.5mg each) Percocet

(b). Medication withdrawals by Respondent:

Date	Time of Removal/Signed out	Medication and amount	Physician's order	Medication Charted	Wasted	Nurses Notes Charted	Discrepancy amount
7/9/07	1232	4mg Morphine	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/9/07	1323	8mg Morphine	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/9/07	1407	2mg Dilaudid	No	No	No	None	2mg Dilaudid
7/9/07	1344	PercocetTwo-tablets (2.5 mg each)	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	None
7/09/07	0825	.5mg Ativan	No	No .	No	No	.5mg Ativan

(c). Total discrepancy noted in this patient record:

-4-

i. 2mg Dilaudid

ii. .5mg Ativan

## (2). PATIENT #1001678737

### (a).. Documented Physician's Order:

Date	Time	Medication Ordered
7/9/07	No time documented	1mg Dilaudid
7/9/09	0120	1mg Dilaudid

### (b). Medication withdrawals by Respondent

Date	Time of removal/signe d out	Medication and amount	Physician's order	Medication Charted	waste	Nurses Notes Charted	Discrepancy Amount
7/9/07	2359	2mg Dilaudid	1mg Dilaudid	Yes-1mg	No	Yes	1mg Dilaudid
7/9/07	0123	2mg Dilaudid	1mg Dilaudid	Yes-1mg	.5mg Wasted at 0601	Yes	.5mg Dilaudid

- (c). Total discrepancy noted in this patient's record:
  - i. 1.5mg Dilaudid
- D. As a result of the investigation, Respondent's employment at SVH was terminated.
- E. On or about March 8, 2010, during an interview with the Board's investigator, Respondent admitted that she had in fact diverted quantities of both Dilaidid and Ativan from SVH during her shift on July 9 10, 2007. Respondent stated that she diverted the drugs for her own use to self-medicate for stress and acute depression which were overwhelming to her at that time.

#### FIRST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE

# (Obtain Controlled Substances by Fraud, Deceit, Misrepresentation or Subterfuge)

16. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions Code section 2761, subdivision (a) on grounds of unprofessional conduct, as defined in Business and Professions Code section 2762, subdivisions (a) and (b), for violating Health and Safety Code section 11170,11171, and 11173 subdivisions (a) and/or (b) and/or (c) in that while on duty as a

1	registered nurse assigned to the Emergency Room of Simi Valley hospital in Simi Valley, CA, on
2	or about July 9 – 10, 2007, Respondent obtained Dilaidid and Ativan for self-administration by
3	use of fraud, deceit, misrepresentation and/or subterfuge by acts related to withdrawal of
4	medications from the Pyxis system in the name of patients 1001677416 and 1001678737.
5	SECOND CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
6	(Use of Controlled Substances In A Manner Injurious To Others)
7	17. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions Code
8	section 2762, Subdivision (b) in that Respondent used controlled substances to an extent or in a
9	manner dangerous to herself or others in that, by her own admission, during her shift at SVH on
10	July 9-10, 2007, she diverted from 2 patients the drugs Dilaidid and Ativan, and self-administered
11	the drugs while on duty.
12	THIRD CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
13	(Falsified Hospital Records)
14	18. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under Business and Professions Code
15	section 2762 (e) in that she falsified and/or made grossly incorrect, grossly inconsistent, or
16	unintelligible entries into SVH Pyxis system records, by reason of her unauthorized withdrawal of
17	Dilaidid and Ativan for patients 1001677416 and 1001678737, in order to diverted the drugs for
18	self-administration, as described more fully above.
19	FOURTH CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE
20	(Unprofessional Conduct)
21	19. Respondent is subject to disciplinary action under section 2761, subdivision (a) on
22	grounds of unprofessional conduct, in that Respondent committed unprofessional conduct in that
23	while on duty as a registered nurse assigned to the Emergency Room of Simi Valley hospital in
24	Simi Valley, CA, on or about July $9 - 10$ , 2007, in that Respondent obtained Dilaidid and Ativan
25	for self-administration by withdrawal of medications from the Pyxis system in the name of
26	patients 1001677416 and 1001678737, as described in paragraphs 16 through 19 above.

## **PRAYER** 1 WHEREFORE, Complainant requests that a hearing be held on the matters herein alleged, 2 and that following the hearing, the Board of Registered Nursing issue a decision: 3 Revoking or suspending Registered Nurse License 695115, issued to Tracy Lynn Blankenship; 5 Ordering Tracy Lynn Blankenship to pay the Board of Registered Nursing the 2. 6 reasonable costs of the investigation and enforcement of this case, pursuant to Business and 7 Professions Code section 125.3; 8 3. Taking such other and further action as deemed necessary and proper. 9 10 11 12 Interim Executive Officer Board of Registered Nursing 13 Department of Consumer Affairs State of California 14 Complainant 15 LA2010600551 60570784.docx 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28